



**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES  
DEPARTMENT OF AUDITOR-CONTROLLER**

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April 24, 2009

TO: Supervisor Don Knabe, Chairman  
Supervisor Gloria Molina  
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas  
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky  
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

FROM: Wendy L. Watanabe  
Auditor-Controller

SUBJECT: **GROUP HOME PROGRAM MONITORING REPORT – THE HELP  
GROUP – PROJECT SIX GROUP HOME**

We have completed a review of Project Six Group Home (Group Home or Agency) operated by The Help Group. The Group Home contracts with the Departments of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and Probation.

Project Six Group Home is a 24-bed facility, which provides care for boys and girls ages 11-17 years who exhibit behavioral, social and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, Project Six Group Home was providing services for six DCFS children and ten privately placed children.

Project Six Group Home is located in the Third District.

**Scope of Review**

The purpose of the review is to determine whether the Agency is providing the services as outlined in their Program Statement. In addition, the review covers basic child safety and licensing issues and includes an evaluation of the Agency's Program Statement, internal policies and procedures, child case records, employee records, a facility inspection and interviews with children placed in the Group Home at the time of the review. Interviews with children are designed to obtain their perspectives on the program services provided by the Agency and to ensure adherence to the Foster Youth Bill of Rights.

### **Summary of Findings**

Generally, the Agency is providing the services as outlined in their Program Statement. However, the Agency needs to repair and repaint the walls in three bedrooms and ensure that all members of the treatment team are included in the development and implementation of the Needs and Services Plans.

Attached is a detailed report of the review.

### **Review of Report**

We discussed our report with the Agency's management. In response to the recommendations made in the report, the Agency's management completed a corrective action plan (attached) which we approved. We thank the management and staff for their cooperation during our review.

If you have any questions, please call me or your staff may contact Don Chadwick at (213) 253-0301.

WLW:MMO:DC:AA:dl

Attachment

c: William T Fujioka, Chief Executive Officer  
Patricia S. Ploehn, Director, DCFS  
Ted Myers, Chief Deputy Director, DCFS  
Susan Kerr, Senior Deputy Director, DCFS  
Robert B. Taylor, Chief Probation Officer  
Gary H. Carmona, Chairman of the Board, The Help Group  
Dr. Barbara Firestone, Executive Director, The Help Group  
Public Information Office  
Audit Committee

**The Help Group  
Project Six Group Home  
Van Nuys, California 91406  
License Number: 197606825  
Rate Classification Level: 12**

**I. Facility and Environment**

**Method of assessment – Observation**

**Comments:**

Project Six Group Home is located in a residential community. The exterior of the Group Home is well maintained. The front and back yards are clean and adequately landscaped.

The interior of the Group Home is well maintained. The common quarters are neat and clean. There is adequate furniture and lighting in the Group Home. The Group Home provides a home-like environment.

Generally, the children's bedrooms are well maintained. The rooms are clean and orderly and have age-appropriate personalized decorations. There is adequate furniture, lighting and storage space. Window coverings and window screens are in good repair. The mattresses are comfortable, the beds all have a full complement of linens, and children's sleeping arrangements are appropriate. However, the walls are dirty and damaged in girls' bedroom two and boys' bedrooms eight and nine.

The Group Home maintains age-appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also board games, TVs and DVD players. Books and resource materials, including computers with a variety of programs, are also available.

The Group Home maintains a sufficient supply of perishable and non perishable foods.

**Recommendation**

- 1. The Help Group management repair and repaint the walls in girls' bedroom two and boys' bedrooms eight and nine.**

**II. Program Services**

**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews**

**Sample size: Four**

**Comments:**

Children meet the Group Home's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. Children are assessed for needed services within thirty days of placement.

The Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) are current, comprehensive and include short and long term goals. The case files also reflect adequate documentation to show that children are receiving treatment services. However, input from all members of the treatment team is not included in the development and implementation of the NSPs.

**Recommendation**

- 2. The Help Group management include all members of the treatment team in the development and implementation of the NSPs.**

**III. Educational and Emancipation Services**

**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews**

**Sample size: Four**

**Comments:**

Children are attending school. Children are provided with educational support and resources to meet their educational needs and are progressing satisfactorily in school. The Group Home's program includes the development of children's daily living, self-help and survival skills.

Children are provided with opportunities to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate.

**Recommendation**

**None.**

**IV. Recreation and Activities**

**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews**

**Sample size: Four**

**Comments:**

The Group Home provides children with sufficient recreational activities and leisure time. Children are provided with opportunities to participate in planning activities. Children also participate in extra-curricular, enrichment and social activities in which

they have an interest. The Group Home provides transportation to and from the activities.

**Recommendation**

**None.**

**V. Psychotropic Medication**

**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents**

**Comments:**

Children have current court authorizations for psychotropic medication. Documentation confirms that children are routinely seen by the prescribing psychiatrist.

Children are informed about their psychotropic medication and are aware of their right to refuse medication. Medication distribution logs are properly maintained.

**Recommendation**

**None.**

**VI. Personal Rights**

**Method of assessment – Interviews with children**

**Sample size: Four**

**Comments:**

Children are informed about the Group Home's policies and procedures. Children report that they feel safe in the Group Home and are provided with appropriate staff supervision. Children express satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with staff and report that the staff treats them with respect and dignity.

Children report that they are assigned chores that are reasonable and not too demanding. Children are allowed to make and receive personal telephone calls, send and receive unopened mail and have private visitors. Children attend religious services of their choice.

Children report that the discipline policies are consistently enforced and that there are fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Children report satisfaction with meals and snacks. Children also receive voluntary medical, dental and psychiatric care.

**Recommendation**

None.

**VII. Clothing and Allowance**

**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews**

**Sample size: Four**

**Comments:**

The Group Home provides appropriate clothing, items of necessity and the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance to children. Children are provided with opportunities to select their own clothes. Clothing provided to children is of good quality and of sufficient quantity.

The Group Home provides children with the required minimum weekly allowance. Children spend their allowances as they choose.

The Group Home provides children with adequate personal care items. Children are also encouraged and assisted in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

**Recommendation**

None.

**VIII. Personnel Background Checks**

**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents**

**Sample size for employee record evaluation: Ten**

**Comments:**

The Group Home has obtained the required criminal and child abuse clearances for their employees.

**Recommendation**

None.

TO: Candace Rhue, Group Home Audit Supervisor  
Los Angeles County, Department of Auditor-Controller

FROM: Project Six Group Home

RE: Corrective Action Plan for Audit – January 6, 2009

The Corrective Action Plan (CAP) has been implemented as follows for the Project Six Group home located at 15339 Saticoy Street, Van Nuys, California 91406 (License # 197606825):

1a. Recommendation

The Help Group management repair and paint the walls in girl's bedroom two and the boy's bedroom eight and nine.

Corrective Action Plan

All three bedrooms have been re-painted. Management will inspect the rooms daily to ensure that the walls are clean and free from debris.

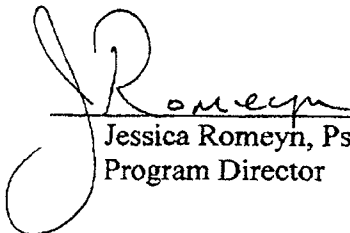
2a. Recommendation

The Help Group management includes all members of the treatment team in the development and implementation of the Needs and Services Plans for all children.

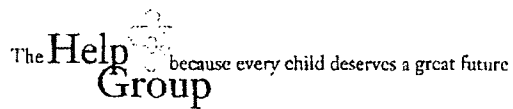
Corrective Action Plan

Management has created a document that requests the participation of team members in the development and implementation of Needs and Services Quarterlies. This document will be sent out to team members requesting their participation in the NSQ process. Copies of the document and fax transmittals and/or confirmations will be attached to the NSQ in question. (Please see the letter attached)

Jessica Romeyn, Program Director will be responsible for monitoring the corrective action plan.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jessica Romeyn, Psy.D.  
Program Director

2/10/09  
Date



(Date)

Dear (CSW/ Parent),

Project Six conducts and documents a quarterly review of progress for every resident. This process reviews the resident's progress in therapy, work and/or school, progress towards specific goals, reviews medical and medication issues and describes preliminary discharge plans. This report is completed by the Project Six therapist in consultation with other members of the treatment team (including the resident, psychiatrist, case worker, family, and others as appropriate).

The next progress report will be due on (DATE). Because you play an integral role in the treatment team we would like your input in the development and implementation of the quarterly reports. Please contact (THERAPIST) by (DATE) so that your input can be documented in the quarterly report. Thank you again for your continued participation in the treatment process and for your dedication to the residents. I can be reached by phone at (YOUR NUMBER HERE)

Sincerely,

(YOUR NAME HERE)